

ANOTHER EARTH

by
Mike Cahill and Brit Marling

Draft 3.0
September 25, 2009

Abandon LLC
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1 INT. HOUSE PARTY - NEW HAVEN, CT - NIGHT 1

At capacity. The living room vibrates with raging teenagers.

RHODA WILLIAMS, 17, newly accepted by MIT, in a bright red dress with a swinging skirt, parties with the ALEX, 17, an early-acceptance Yale, a fellow member of the astronomy club and long time sparring partner of Rhoda's. Alex and Rhoda drink beer after beer.

We see the planet Jupiter through a child's eyes.

RHODA (V.O.)

I saw this image when I was a kid.
The photograph of Jupiter taken by
NASA's Voyager. Beautiful...but
nothing special until shown in
rapid succession. Suddenly, Jupiter
was alive, breathing. I was
hypnotized.

Jupiter begins moving and pulsating.

At the party, Rhoda and Alex kiss, then continuing dancing and drinking.

RHODA (V.O.)

I was seventeen when I got my
acceptance letter to MIT. I felt
like anything was possible.

Rhoda looks into her beer bottle as Alex watches, laughing.

RHODA (TO ALEX)

I don't want to eat the apple of
cynicism.

RHODA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

And it was.

MAIN TITLE: ANOTHER EARTH

2 INT./EXT. RHODA'S CAR - NIGHT 2

Rhoda drives, radio blaring, enjoying the ride. A DJ cuts in and Rhoda turns it up.

(CONTINUED)

DJ FLAVA

Yo, whassup, baby! It's your boy, Flava, F-L-A-V-A. That's your dude with the big mouth. Yo, I don't know if you heard the news, but the scientists say they just discovered another planet super close to us, with the conditions that could support life. Really? Well, now it's visible up in the night sky. They say if you look just east of the North Star, you'll see it. It's a little blue spot. I want all you lovers out there to make a wish on a tiny, blue star, as I play this hot joint for you right now. It's your boy, Flava!

Rhoda cranes her neck to glimpse the sky. For a moment, she is hypnotized by the cosmos...

Tranquility.

BIRD'S EYE VIEW of a Volvo station wagon waiting in an empty intersection for the light to change.

JOHN BURROUGHS and his wife MAYA BURROUGHS, who is pregnant, are in the front seat. Their young son AMOS is in his car seat in the back. They are playing a word game.

JOHN (O.S.)

That's easy.

MAYA (O.S.)

What rhymes with honey?

AMOS (O.S.)

Bunny.

JOHN

He's like, all right, enough with the "what rhymes." Let's do some animals. You wanna give him some animals?

(CONTINUED)

JOHN (CONT'D)

What rhymes with....

MAYA

...lion?

JOHN

Oh, my gosh.

AMOS

Pion.

JOHN

A pion. A small puma of the high
Himalayas.

Maya holds up one of Amos's toys.

MAYA

Did we figure out what this guy's
name is?

AMOS

Bob.

MAYA

Bob the robot.

JOHN

He looks to me like a Bob.

Maya takes John's hand and places it on her belly.

MAYA

Feel her.

JOHN

She's in there all right.

MAYA

I hope so.

AMOS

What rhymes with...light?

JOHN

Light?

3 CONTINUED: (2)

3

MAYA

Oh, that's a good one.

Suddenly, a car barrels into their car with a deafening CRASH.

4 I/E. RHODA'S CAR/ACCIDENT SCENE, RURAL ROAD - NIGHT

4

Labored breathing. From Rhoda's point of view, we see blurry, distorted glimpses of a ruined station wagon through broken glass.

Bloody nose, ankle shattered, Rhoda stumbles over to the smoking steel mess.

Inside, Maya is clearly dead, and John is unconscious but breathing. Even in his sleep there is a gravitas to this man. An original face that is striking.

Siren lights suddenly illuminate the scene.

The front windshield of the station wagon has shattered.

Rhoda sees something on the side of the road and walks towards it. A little boy in pajamas lies face down in the snow, which is quickly turning red all around him.

5 INT. PRISON - DAY

5

Rhoda sits alone in the dark, windowless cell.

6 INT. PRISON - DAY - 4 YEARS LATER

6

Rhoda, thinner, aged 10 years in 4, eyes and features sharper, harder. Her hair has grown long, it reaches the middle of her back in a low ponytail- a vestige of femininity.

TITLE CARD: FOUR YEARS LATER

Through a bulletproof window, a guard slides out an envelope of Rhoda's things. She signs a clipboard.

(CONTINUED)

In the background, a small TV plays behind him - a roundtable-type program of personalities discussing the OTHER EARTH: images of a blue green planet.

MALE BROADCASTER

By all appearances, the planet seems to be a mirror to our own, from the continental structures to the oceans. Even their cities are our cities.

MALE MODERATOR

And where are we in terms of communication?

ANNA

That's exactly my point. If this planet is sustaining intelligent life of comparable levels to our own--

PAUL

It's a very significant point. So far, we have nothing. We have a jumble of radio signals, the strongest of which are military radars.

ANNA

But even those radio signals are not something we can parse out and understand.

MALE PANELIST

We don't even know it really exists. It could be some cosmic mirror of sorts.

MALE MODERATOR

You've written extensively about that, as the most likely explanation for why it's identical to our own planet.

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED: (2)

6

PAUL

This planet exists. It has mass and
it has a clearly detectable orbit.
It's even having radio signals.

Rhoda exits the prison.

7 EXT. PRISON - DAY

7

Rhoda walks out of the prison gates. She wears ill-fitting
clothes and walks with a boyish gait. She carries one thing:
a rolled-up, tattered POSTER.

Rhoda looks across the street and sees a boy in baggy jeans
walk by. He turns to look at her: he wears an ALIEN MASK. A
passing truck eclipses him from view.

She looks up, takes in the immensity of an unfettered sky-
Earth II hanging like a faded crescent moon.

An SUV pulls up at the end of the walkway. Her father's SUV
pulls up and her mother gets out and embraces Rhoda, then her
father.

8 I/E. SUV - DAY

8

ROBERT WILLIAMS, 50s, Rhoda's Dad, the reserved demeanor of a
former military man, drives fast down the highway. Rhoda
braces herself with the door handle. She sits in the back
seat with her younger brother **JEFF**, 17, a punk kid.

KIM WILLIAMS, 50s, Rhoda's Mother, a woman who has had to
adjust her expectations for life one too many times, but
remains outwardly optimistic, rides in the passenger seat.

JEFF

So did you like have a crew on the
inside? Do you have any tattoos?

KIM

Jeffrey!

(CONTINUED)

JEFF
I'm just asking.

8 CONTINUED: (2)

8

JEFF (CONT'D)

You hear about that guy who's
having the contest to go to the
other Earth? I mean, it's so
stupid. They're gonna get sucked
into a black star and die.

9 INT. WILLIAMS HOUSE/RHODA'S ROOM - NIGHT

9

Rhoda looks around her room, uncomfortable. Rhoda examines
these artifacts from another lifetime. Kim enters the
doorway.

KIM

Is it good to be home?

RHODA

Yeah.

Rhoda doesn't reciprocate the warmth. Kim, embarrassed,
reins her emotions in--

KIM

If you need anything--

Rhoda nods. Kim points to a stack of towels she has brought
Rhoda.

KIM (CONT'D)

Towels.

Kim leaves.

KIM (CONT'D)

Night.

RHODA

Good night, Mom.

10 INT. WILLIAMS HOME/ATTIC - LATER

10

Rhoda opens her laptop, begins researching the Virgin
Galactic flight. She learns that one seat will be given away
to the winner of an essay contest.

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED:

10

MALE VOICE
(over speaker)
Three, two, one. Booster ignition
and liftoff.

KEITH HARDING
(over speaker)
This will be a trip like no other.
We will give those who travel with
us a unique and life-changing
experience. Travel to Earth 2, now
booking.

Win a flight to EARTH 2

Write 500 words below explaining why you should win the trip!
Enter text here...

The question: *Why do you want to go to Earth II?*

Rhoda thinks, then closes her laptop and lies down on her
bed.

11 INT. WILLIAMS HOME/ATTIC - LATER

11

Unable to sleep, Rhoda goes to the attic and begins moving
things around. She puts her sheets and blanket on the floor
and sets a lamp beside it.

She unrolls the poster, tacks it to the ceiling above her
bed. She lies down and stares up at it: an image of the birth
of a star 13 million light years away.

12 INT. GOVERNMENT EMPLOYMENT AGENCY OFFICE - DAY

12

Rhoda, in the same clothes she left prison in, sits before
Wanda, 40's, African American, a strong woman with a warm
energy.

RHODA
I'd like to do something with my
hands. You know, maybe outdoors?
Maybe not.

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED:

12

WANDA

Come on. I mean, you could do something with your hands, but you have such a great mind.

RHODA

I don't wanna really be around too many people or do too much talking.

Wanda scrolls through her computer listings.

WANDA

All right. Well, there's a maintenance position open at West Haven High School.

13 EXT. WILLIAMS HOUSE - DAY

13

Rhoda leaves the house and begins walking.

DR. RICHARD BERENDZEN (V.O.)

Just imagine that you're asleep and then you awake. You're not sure where you are. You're not sure if anyone else is around. What would you probably do first? You likely would look around and say, "Hello? Hello?" You're attempting to find, "Am I alone?" We here on Earth would like to know.

14 INT. HIGH SCHOOL - AFTERNOON

14

Rhoda scrubs out toilets in the girls' bathroom. A gaggle of senior girls come in from drama rehearsal. Rhoda keeps her head down, listens to their youthful prattle.

HS GIRL 1

Me and Rob got in this huge, stupid fight last night.

HS GIRL 2

Really? About what?

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED:

14

HS GIRL 1

I don't know. We were just hanging out and he started fighting with me.

Two other girls enter the bathroom and the girls chatter and laugh and leave the bathroom when the bell rings.

15 INT. HIGH SCHOOL - LATER -

15

Rhoda returns her cleaning cart to the custodial closet. **KUMAR**, 60's, Indian, BLIND, head custodian, listens to his portable radio while polishing his desk.

DJ FLAVA

(over radio)

Yo! It's the Winter Solstice, the shortest day of the year, which means it's the longest night of the year. Take advantage. You all know what I'm talking about. Also, today marks the anniversary of the discovery of Earth 2 a few years back. Can you remember what you were doing that night? I know I remember. I met this girl from Bridgeport. She had a thing for the Flava. That's right, baby, you know how we do. Baby, if you're still out there, boo, holler at your boy. Flava, F-L-A-V-A. Not only do I have a big mouth, I've got a big-- You know my number. Call me.

Rhoda loads her cart with supplies. She stares at Kumar as she walks out of the room.

16 EXT. ROADSIDE - NEW HAVEN - AFTERNOON

16

Low hanging gray clouds.

Rhoda walks, wearing her janitor uniform and a jacket too thin for the cold. She walks. And walks. And walks. Until the manicured lawns become vacant trash-strewn lots and then bare fields.

17 EXT. ACCIDENT SITE - TWILIGHT

17

Rhoda stands in the street, at the crosswalk. Looks up at the gray sky. Looks down at the road. The field beyond. The trees stripped bare.

Nothing. No answers

Headlights on the horizon coming her way. Rhoda moves off to the side of the road, starts walking away. But as the car approaches the intersection, it stops. Rhoda stops too and watches.

A man, 40s, bearded, unkempt, gets out of the car--

He is haphazardly dressed -- pajama bottoms, heavy coat, boots. He turns--

It's JOHN, ALIVE, no longer in a coma. There is a wild quality to him -- he seems removed from the civilized world.

He walks to the site of the accident. Stands there, looks around--

Rhoda hides.

John abruptly takes something from his jacket, sets it down, gets back in his car and drives away, passing Rhoda in the shadows.

Rhoda walks back, picks up what John left behind:

A child's toy. It's the small red robot toy.

18 INT. WILLIAMS HOME/ATTIC - NIGHT

18

Rhoda Googles the accident, searching for JOHN BURROUGHS. Article headline reads: *Yale Professor in Coma After Accident Claims Family.*

(CONTINUED)

Rhoda follows these electronic bread crumbs, collecting the details of John's life - his luminous career as a composer and the chair of the music conservatory at Yale, his marriage to Maya, a professor of photography, the birth of their son, photographs, articles, old websites.

18 CONTINUED: (2) 18

She stumbles upon -- John's address.

Rhoda stares at it. Quickly shuts the laptop.

19 INT. BUS - TWILIGHT 19

Rhoda rides the bus.

20 EXT. JOHN'S HOUSE - EVENING 20

Rhoda stands across the street looking at a weather beaten white clapboard house. The gutter has fallen loose on one side, the leaves of many seasons rot in the yard.

Rhoda checks the address to the piece of paper she holds in her hand.

There's a truck in the driveway.

Rhoda watches the house. She approaches cautiously. Heads around the side of the house, passing trash bags piled at the door along with grease-stained pizza boxes and paper bags of liquor bottles.

She catches movement in a window. She peers in:

Most of the interior lights are off. John sits on the couch, drinking. His face glows blue in the light of a television. He holds a game control in his right hand, which he keeps flicking halfheartedly at the screen: Nintendo Wii bowling.

21 EXT. ROAD - NEW HAVEN - NIGHT 21

Rhoda walks. As she walks, she takes off one glove. Drops it in the snow. She takes off the other glove, drops it too. Keeps walking. Next, her hat.

She veers off the road and into a bare, snow covered field. As she walks towards its center, she takes off her thin coat. Drops it. Keeps walking.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED:

21

Finally, she stops. Snow in every direction. The world
uniformly white, peaceful. Rhoda steps out of her janitor
coverall. Stands naked in the brutal cold, feeling nothing.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED: (2)

21

Rhoda lies on her bare back across the ice. She looks up at the sky-

EARTH II looms large above her, glowing like a full moon. Rhoda stares at it.

Her body begins to shiver involuntarily. Teeth chattering like a jackhammer. Blinking red lights in the sky as a plane cross in front of the other Earth.

Rhoda becomes suddenly very still.

We move above her, nearly lose her in the snow. White headlights of a car sweep across the field.

FADE OUT.

22 INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

22

Rhoda sits wrapped in an aluminum heating suit, her hands and feet in what look like puffy, reflective oven mitts. She stares straight ahead at the wall.

Her dad sits beside her. They don't say anything. A TV set can be heard from somewhere.

FEMALE REPORTER

(over television)

...company that's underwriting civilian travel to Earth 2. Keith, with all the risks and all the unknowns, why are you doing this?

KEITH HARDING

(over television)

I don't think governments should dictate exploration. And I don't think we should automatically ban average citizens from being the first to see this new world. Win a flight to EARTH 2

Rhoda can't look at Robert. She sticks out her hand bound in the heavy mitt. Robert holds her mitt.

23 INT. WILLIAMS HOME/ATTIC - LATER

23

Rhoda, her fingers in bandages, looks through the Richard Branson Virgin site online- the civilian shuttle to space. She re-looks at the essay question: *Why do you want to go to Earth II?*

She starts typing. Her words become voice-over as we see her mopping halls, clearing dishes after dinner, walking alone, always an outsider, always observing other people talking, laughing, playing- a girl kicked off the merry-go-round of life and watching its endless spinning.

RHODA (V.O.)

When early explorers set out west across the Atlantic, most people thought the world was flat. Most people thought if you sailed far enough west, you would drop off the edge of a plane into nothing. These vessels sailing out into the unknown, they weren't carrying noblemen, or aristocrats, artists, merchants. They were crewed by people living on the edge of life- madmen, orphans, outcasts, and ex-convicts, like myself. As a felon, I am an unlikely candidate for most things. But perhaps, not for this. Perhaps I am the most likely.

Rhoda, alone, watches the sunrise from the roof of the garage. Earth II a fading crescent in the sky.

24 INT. GROCERY STORE - NIGHT

24

Rhoda, dressed in her janitor coverall, stands in the candy/cookie aisle. The store is thinly stocked.

She picks up a container of cut fruit.

Rhoda waits in line to pay for her fruit..

(CONTINUED)

A young man in front of her, dark hair, nice tweed coat,
turns around. It takes a moment, but he recognizes Rhoda.

24 CONTINUED: (2)

24

And we recognize him too- from the high school party four years ago.

ALEX

Rhoda? Hi. Alex.

RHODA

I know who you are.

ALEX

How are you? How is everything?

RHODA

It's great.

Rhoda notices three bottles of Moet Champagne on the counter-

RHODA (CONT'D)

Are you celebrating?

ALEX

Oh, uh, yeah...I just got into business school. Boston.

A beautiful young girl, CLAIRE, cuts in the line, grabbing Alex.

CLAIRE

Hey, I didn't get the arugula, but I found this spring mix.

ALEX

That's good. This is Rhoda, an old friend of mine from high school.

CLAIRE

Oh, hi...

(taking in Rhoda's janitor uniform)

Claire.

RHODA

Hi.

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED: (3)

24

Rhoda holds the fruit.

ALEX

So, are you working?

(CONTINUED)

RHODA
West Haven High.

ALEX
Yeah? What do you teach?

RHODA
I clean.

ALEX
What?

RHODA
I clean the school.

ALEX
Oh, that's cool. Probably very
therapeutic.

Alex turns to sign the bill. He's friendly, but removed and ultimately uninviting--

ALEX (CONT'D)
All right, well, it was good to see
you, Rhoda.

CLAIRE
Yeah, it was nice to meet you.

RHODA
Nice to meet you.

Alex and Claire exchange a look as they walk off. Rhoda absorbs this.

CLAIRE
How do you know her?

ALEX
High school.

25 INT. HIGH SCHOOL/BATHROOM - DAY

25

Rhoda scrubs at a stain on the bathroom stall wall- she scrubs vigorously, with steel wool. But the stain doesn't lift.

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED:

25

She sits back on her heels, exhausted, lets the door fall closed. Written on the back of it in black graffiti:

THE END OF THE WORLD IS HERE.

26 EXT. JOHN'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON (RHODA'S FIRST CLEAN)

26

John's truck in the driveway.

Rhoda, still in her CUSTODIAL UNIFORM, walks up to the porch, hesitates, barrels forward. She notes the trash bags, boxes filled with cans and Styrofoam containers crowding the porch. She knocks on the front door.

Knocks a second time, louder. The door flies open mid knock--

RHODA
Mr. Burroughs?

JOHN
Yes?

There stands John, in his pajama pants and a dingy T-shirt, a knit cap on his head, and a scowl on his face. He's hung over, squinting and covering his eyes, and in no mood.

Rhoda is stunned and can't answer.

JOHN (CONT'D)
What do you want?

She stammers and can't even manage to look up at him.

RHODA
I came to tell you about....

JOHN
What?

RHODA
Tell you about a free trial of our
cleaning service.

(CONTINUED)

What? JOHN

26 CONTINUED: (2)

26

RHODA

I'm from Maid in Haven. We're a cleaning service. We're looking to expand our territory and our--

JOHN

No, thank you.

John shuts the door. Rhoda stands on the porch.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Did you say "trial cleaning"?

Rhoda stares.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Did you say "trial cleaning"? God.

RHODA

Yes, it's a, (stammers) sorry, it's, yeah.

JOHN

Is it definitely free?

RHODA

Yeah.

He waves her to come in.

JOHN

Fine. Let's go. Come on.

27 INT. JOHN'S HOUSE/FOYER - CONTINUOUS

27

Rhoda follows John into the house. He shuts the door.

Stacks of newspapers, unsorted mail, a musty thick quality to the air.

JOHN

Come on. You can start in here.

Rhoda follows John into--

28

INT. JOHN'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

28

Dishes overflow in a sink filled with grey water. Open cupboards with nothing much in them. Empty delivery boxes. A cloud of small gnats orbiting old fruit.

JOHN

Did you say "Maid In Haven"?

RHODA

Yes.

JOHN

Like New Haven?

RHODA

Yes.

JOHN

You're pretty far from New Haven.

RHODA

There's a lot of competition in town, so we're offering the free trial as a--

JOHN

Where are your supplies?

John looks at her, square in the eyes. There is a menacing quality to him, an instability- one is not sure what he might be capable of. This man is not adhering to the tacit social contract.

RHODA

Normally the first visit is a consultation.

JOHN

Okay, well, you're already here, so why don't you just...clean this first time? Okay? There's mops and things in there. I'll be in that room.

(CONTINUED)

He opens a broom closet, walks off.

28 CONTINUED: (2)

28

Rhoda looks at the back door in the kitchen -- thinks of sneaking out.

She turns abruptly and faces the mess.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Everything okay?

RHODA
Yes.

29 INT. JOHN'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

29

Rhoda scrubs aged food off a dish- it doesn't come loose. She uses a knife.

Rhoda opens the fridge- a dank odor fills the room, moldy milk and leftovers.

Rhoda moves to a portion of the counter with a large, messy array of prescription bottles, etc. She starts to arrange them, hesitates, leaves them alone.

Rhoda looks through the kitchen doorway and sees John watching television.

She examines the items on his refrigerator -- odd notes, his handwriting.

Rhoda Windexes a mirror- she does not look at herself.

30 INT. JOHN'S HOUSE/STUDY - LATER

30

Rhoda picks her way through the maze of books stacked on the floor in tall piles to a desk. The desk is covered in scrolls of handwritten music and rusted SAWS.

Rhoda picks up a saw, runs her finger down the length of the steel- a thick layer of dust. She gently touches the jagged metal teeth.

31 INT. JOHN'S HOUSE/LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

31

John enters from the kitchen, registering the cleanliness.
Rhoda has begun making headway in the living room.

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED:

31

JOHN

All right, that's enough.

He startles her.

JOHN (CONT'D)

It's time for you to go.

Rhoda starts putting away the cleaning supplies into the cupboard with haste and nervousness.

JOHN (CONT'D)

So, wait. Is that it for the trial?

RHODA

Yeah, it's a one-day trial.

John opens the door and Rhoda steps outside.

JOHN

So, I'll see you next week?

RHODA

I'll let them know. They might send someone else.

JOHN

Okay.

RHODA

Same time?

JOHN

Yeah, this is a good time. This is a good day, too.

32 EXT. JOHN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

32

Rhoda walks fast down the driveway.

A beat up car has pulled into the driveway. A woman gets out of the driver's seat. Her coat blows open in the wind - breasts and thighs spilling out of a tiny purple dress, heels, a little purse, heavy makeup. She makes her way up the driveway.

33

INT. WILLIAMS HOME/DINING ROOM - NIGHT

33

The Williams family eats dinner around the table.

ROBERT

So, Jeff, I think we have a very
important toast in order--

KIM WILLIAMS

(popping up)

Oh wait! Hold on, I just got the
cider!

Kim pours sparkling cider into wine glasses.

JEFF

Come on, guys, it's no big deal.

ROBERT

No, it is a big deal. You have
shown great perseverance in the
face of challenges. And we should
salute you.

JEFF

Come on Rho-tard, aren't you gonna
ask what happened?

RHODA

What happened?

JEFF

I got into UConn.

KIM

We are so proud of you! Chin chin!

ROBERT

Here, here!

Robert raises his glass. Everyone toasts.

34 INT. WILLIAMS HOME/ATTIC - NIGHT

34

Rhoda acts out a meeting with John where she confesses to him.

(CONTINUED)

34 CONTINUED:

34

RHODA

Mr. Burroughs, I came to tell you
that I saw you at the site of the
accident. And I'm sorry for what
happened to you and your family.
It was my fault.

35 EXT. JOHN'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON -RHODA'S 2ND CLEANING VISIT 35

Rhoda walks up to the house, murmuring her written
confession, trying to muster the courage. She does not allow
herself pause--

Rhoda knocks on the front door. It opens.

JOHN

Okay, good.

RHODA

I, uh--

JOHN

Come on in. You can start where you
finished.

RHODA

I was wondering if I could talk to
you about something?

He quickly walks back into the back of the house.

JOHN

Not now. Little bit later.

John heads down the hall--

36 INT. JOHN'S HOUSE - MONTAGE

36

Rhoda begins cleaning. Scrubbing. Wiping. Removing hair from
clogged drains. Changing light bulbs that have long been
dead. Taking out stacks of newspapers to the recycling bin.

She cleans slowly at first. Hesitantly. But gradually forgets
herself. Begins to enjoy the cleaning.

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED: 36

As if bringing some order and cleanliness to John's house is bringing some kind of order and cleanliness to her soul.

SOUND: a discordant pounding of piano keys, sound of something thrown to the floor--

Rhoda stops her work, listening. The house is silent again.

Rhoda dusts around the office nook. She encounters a handful of framed photographs stuffed behind the cabinet. Pulls them out to get to the dust--

Rhoda freezes. Stunned by the images:

Maya, Amos and John.

37 INT. JOHN'S HOUSE/BATHROOM - AFTERNOON 37

Rhoda sits on the edge of the tub, shaken. She pulls out a crumbled paper -- the notes of her confession. She absorbs them, hands trembling. Drinks water from the sink.

38 INT. JOHN'S HOUSE/BEDROOM - AFTERNOON 38

Rhoda walks toward John's bedroom, the door open. She peers in:

John sits on the edge of the bed. So still it seems he's left his body.

Rhoda watches him. Her confession dwarfed by the isolation and depth of his grief. Finally--

RHODA
(softly)
I'm finished.

JOHN
(without turning around)
Check's on the kitchen table.

39 EXT. METRO NORTH PLATFORM - TWILIGHT 39

Rhoda stands waiting for the train. She tears up the MAID BRIGADE check from John. Throws it into a garbage can.

- 40 INT. PROFESSIONAL CLEANING SUPPLY STORE - LATER 40
Rhoda wanders the aisles selecting cleaning supplies with care. Sponges, a bucket, super absorbent towels.
- 41 EXT. STREETS, HAMDEN 41
Rhoda walks down the sidewalk, carrying a bucket of supplies. A man wearing a sign trails along beside her. The sign says:
"OUR MEMORIES ARE IMPLANTS BY EARTH 2."
- CONSPIRACY THEORIST
We're not real. We're not real.
We're a projection of the
imagination of Earth 2.
- 42 INT. JOHN'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - AFTERNOON (RHODA'S 3RD CLEAN) 42
Rhoda knocks and waits. No answer. As she knocks again the door pushes open.

Rhoda enters. John is passed out on the couch, same T-shirt and pajama pants. An empty liquor bottle sits on the table.

Rhoda watches him sleep. She collects the bottle and glasses.

She walks into the kitchen and unpacks her bucket of new supplies.
- 43 EXT. JOHN'S HOUSE - KITCHEN SIDE - AFTERNOON 43
Rhoda cleans a window outside the kitchen. She looks in as she cleans -- sees John enter kitchen, still in pajama bottoms.

He fumbles through the array of pill bottles -- pops a few. Swallows them without water.
- 44 INT. JOHN'S HOUSE/GUEST ROOM - AFTERNOON 44
Thick dust covers abandoned toys, photographs. Rhoda uncovers a disassembled TELESCOPE in a box.

(CONTINUED)

44 CONTINUED:

44

She takes it out, handling the pieces carefully. Cleaning them off. Building it again by the window.

John passes by down the hall--

Noticing Rhoda he stops. Watches Rhoda at work from behind the hanging partition. A kind of curiosity kindles in his eye.

45 INT. WILLIAMS HOUSE/LIVING ROOM - EVENING

45

Rhoda enters the house, the sound of the television on high volume. Rhoda follows the sound into the living room.

Rhoda's parents, brother, neighbors, everyone crowds around the television, riveted to the screen. Kim motions for her to sit beside her, but Rhoda stands in the back.

ON TELEVISION - SETI INSTITUTE, MOUNTAIN VIEW, CA

Large, white radio telescopes turned up to the night sky like blank faces.

DR. JOAN TALLIS, director of SETI (Search for Extra-Terrestrial Intelligence), sits before a radio control panel wearing headphones. Astronomers monitor incoming radio wave feeds on computer screens around her.

DR. TALLIS

(into microphone)

This is Dr. Joan Tallis of SETI,
the United States, planet Earth. Do
you read me? Is anyone out there?

Static fuzz.....

Dr. Tallis leans over to a TECHNICIAN.

DR. TALLIS (CONT'D)

Let's try another channel.

(back into mic)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

45

CONTINUED:

45

DR. TALLIS (CONT'D)

I repeat, this is Dr. Joan Tallis
of SETI, the United States, planet
Earth.

(CONTINUED)

45 CONTINUED: (2)

45

WOMAN'S VOICE

(through static)

We read you. We read you- clear.

Copy.

DR. TALLIS

(to tech)

Verified?

Tech nods.

DR. TALLIS (CONT'D)

(jubilant, fulfilling a
lifelong dream)This is Dr. Joan Tallis at SETI. Is
someone there? Do you read me?

Static fuzz.....

WOMAN'S VOICE

(through static)

This is...Dr. Joan Tallis...

DR. TALLIS

(dismissive, to tech)

We're getting feedback.

WOMAN'S VOICE

(clearer)

Hello? Hello?

Everyone stops.

WOMAN'S VOICE (CONT'D)

My name is Joan Tallis, I am the
director of SETI in Mountain View,
California.Silence all around. The voice, clearer now, is unmistakably
the same. Is Dr. Joan Tallis talking to Dr. Joan Tallis?

DR. TALLIS

When were you born?

(CONTINUED)

45 CONTINUED: (3)

45

WOMAN'S VOICE

May 7, 1944. When were you born?

(CONTINUED)

45

CONTINUED: (4)

45

DR. TALLIS

May 7, 1944. Mount Pleasant, New
York.

WOMAN'S VOICE

Robinson Hope Hospital...

DR. TALLIS

(truly in awe now)

I took a trip to Cape Canaveral
when I was a kid... Did you?

RHODA MOVES CLOSER TO THE TELEVISION.

WOMAN'S VOICE

Yes, I was 11.

DR. TALLIS

(almost unable to speak)

What did you buy from the gift
store?

Dr. Tallis writes something in large letters across a
notebook.

WOMAN'S VOICE

Space food. I thought I would be
going to space. I bought these...
astro-strawberries.

Dr. Tallis lifts up her notebook, shows it to the astronomers
and us. In large black letters: SPACE STRAWBERRIES.

Rhoda absorbs the implication of this.

As the news program cuts back to the News Anchor, the room
erupts-

KIM

Oh, my God, what does this mean?
What does this all mean?!

(CONTINUED)

45 CONTINUED: (5)

45

ROBERT

Kimberly, it's just an elaborate
hoax! There has to be an
explanation.

(CONTINUED)

45 CONTINUED: (6)

45

JEFF

I told you. We're all gonna die.

ROBERT

Don't, Jeff.

Outside, the next door neighbor starts crying and praying the Rosary.

Chaos and chatter. Rhoda drifts away from it- walks out the front door.

46 EXT. WILLIAMS HOUSE - NIGHT

46

Rhoda gazes up at the night sky: low hanging gray clouds.

All down the block, people have come out of their homes. They all look up in wonder.

47 EXT. NEW HAVEN - AFTERNOON

47

As Rhoda walks, she passes a church- crowds of people standing in the doorway.

DR. RICHARD BERENDZEN (V.O.)

It would be very hard to think "I am over there" and "Can I go meet me?" and "Is that me better than this me?" "Can I learn from the other me? Has the other me made the same mistakes I've made?" Or, "Can I sit down and have a conversation with me?" Wouldn't that be an interesting thing? The truth is, we do that all day long, every day. People don't admit it and they don't think about it too much, but they do. Every day, they're talking in their own head. What's he doing? Why'd he do that? What did she think? Did I say the right thing? In this case, there's another you out there.

(CONTINUED)

47 CONTINUED:

47

A man, 40's, tie, cufflinks, jacket and briefcase beside him on a park bench, takes a hit from a neon swirled weed bowl.

Rhoda walks on. Cuts across a parking lot-

Two little girls and their mother push shopping carts of bottled water.

We pull out to a bird's eye view: in massive letters stretching down the block, the words: *SPARE US*. Rhoda picks her way through the wet paint.

48 INT. JOHN'S HOUSE/LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON (4TH VISIT) 48

John brings the large telescope downstairs and positions it near the big bay window. He wears old corduroys and a worn flannel shirt.

Rhoda watches him as she cleans- his hands, his face, the sharp protrusion of his Adam's apple. John brings his eye level with the telescope, adjusts the focus. When he comes upright again, he notices Rhoda watching him. She looks away quickly, flushes red.

JOHN

You want to take a look?

Rhoda shakes her head. No.

John shrugs, goes back to his telescope. He makes the low whistle of surprise.

JOHN (CONT'D)

My God.

Rhoda sets down her rag. Approaches John, who steps aside.

Rhoda brings her eye level with the eye piece. They stand close together, almost touching, both acutely aware of each other's nearness.

(CONTINUED)

POV TELESCOPE: A blurry blue orb in the twilight. Suddenly, the image gains sharp focus: a spectacular close-up of the Earth in the sky. Rhoda is transfixed.

48 CONTINUED: (2)

48

JOHN (CONT'D)

You're up there, I'm up there. Like
it's just too much.

Rhoda pulls away finally.

RHODA

I wonder if I'm cleaning your
house...

John laughs- a short bark of a laugh.

JOHN

Maybe.

A heavy knock at the front door. John moves off to answer it.

49 INT. JOHN'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - DAY

49

Rhoda is cleaning when John re-enters with a bag of take-out
food.

JOHN

Can you hand me a paper towel?

John starts toward the living room with a plate of food in
his hand. He looks over his shoulder at Rhoda.

JOHN (CONT'D)

If you wanna join me....

John disappears into the living room.

50 INT. JOHN'S HOUSE/LIVING ROOM - DAY

50

John plays Nintendo Wii boxing, his eyes glued to the
television screen. He glances up as Rhoda enters the doorway
with a plate of food.

JOHN

You can come on.

(CONTINUED)

Rhoda sits awkwardly on the edge of a couch with her plate. She nibbles at the food, watching the electronic boxing match.

50 CONTINUED: (2)

50

John looks over at her.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Want to play?

RHODA
I don't know how.

JOHN
It's easy, it's easy. You're a
fighter, I'm sure. The controller's
up on the....

Rhoda gets the controller.

JOHN (CONT'D)
You hold the big one in your right
hand. You okay playing boxing?

RHODA
Yeah.

JOHN
To block shots, you put your hands
up. And you lean and stuff. And for
swinging, you just...swing.

Rhoda takes a practice swing.

JOHN (CONT'D)
That's it. All right?

The bell RINGS.

WII BOXING VOICE
(over television)
Round one! Fight!

The boxing match begins: John and Rhoda both face the TV
screen- punching at the air, dodging each other's blows. John
is controlled and precise in his movements. Rhoda, more
erratic.

JOHN
You gotta fight back. Don't forget
your upper cut.

(CONTINUED)

50

CONTINUED: (3)

50

WII BOXING VOICE
(over television)
Knock out!

On the electronic interface- John's avatar knocks Rhoda's down.

RHODA
My guy is on the ground.

JOHN
You gotta swing.

Getting the hang of it, Rhoda gets into the zone, backing John into the rope, wailing punches to his body.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Easy. Yeah, try and break through this.

Rhoda knocks John's avatar out. She smiles.

John smiles too.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Okay, that one...I gave you.

They play on. Becoming more creative in their movements. Letting go, laughing even.

WII BOXING VOICE
(over television)
Knock out! Player one wins!

JOHN
Is that it, or you got another one in you?

Rhoda raises her controllers in answer.

JOHN (CONT'D)
I thought so.

51 INT. JOHN'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - LATER

51

Rhoda washes the last dishes. John walks in, hands her a check, then goes over to his prescription meds for relief from a headache from the wii boxing.

JOHN

I didn't see your car.

RHODA

I take Metro North.

JOHN

I'll give you a lift.

RHODA

No, that's all right.

JOHN

It's too cold to wait for the train.

RHODA

I don't mind the cold.

JOHN

Really, it's okay.

RHODA

Okay.

52 INT./EXT. JOHN'S CAR - NIGHT

52

John drives. Rhoda stares out the window.

JOHN

So, are you from New Haven?

RHODA

Yeah.

JOHN

Still have family there?

(CONTINUED)

Yeah. RHODA

JOHN

You like working at Maid in Haven?

RHODA

It's all right.

JOHN

Yeah. Have you been doing it
awhile?

RHODA

Couple months. You see that Joan
Tallis broadcast?

JOHN

(chuckling) Yeah.

RHODA

It's amazing.

JOHN

I can't stop thinking about it.
Another me up there somewhere.

RHODA

If you met yourself, what would you
say?

JOHN

"Hey, you up for a video game?"
Probably beat me. What would you
say?

RHODA

"Better luck next time."

JOHN

Really?

RHODA

No, no. (chuckles) No, I mean....
I'm sure I'd be speechless.

RHODA (CONT'D)

Up at the corner here is good.
Right here. And then you can just
keep-- You can just stay--

(CONTINUED)

52 CONTINUED: (3)

52

Rhoda, nervous to have John know where she lives.

JOHN

No, no, I'll take you to your house. Is this it?

RHODA

Just to the side, behind the van.

John stops the truck.

JOHN

All right, so, I'll see you next week.

RHODA

Yeah. Thanks for the lift.

JOHN

Sure.

Rhoda gets out.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Oh, you know, I'm sorry, my memory's not what it used to be. I forgot your name.

RHODA

I don't think I ever told you.

JOHN

Really? That's not very polite of me. So, it's...?

RHODA

Rhoda.

JOHN

Rhoda. All right. Good night, Rhoda. I'll see you next week.

RHODA

Good night.

She shuts the car door. Rhoda walks up the steps to her house. John waits until she is inside then drives off.

53 INT. HIGH SCHOOL/HALLWAY - DAY

53

Rhoda and Kumar are cleaning the floors, he is using a broom and she is mopping. Rhoda sees that Kumar has knocked over a plastic cup and liquid has spilled onto the floor that he cannot see. She goes to him and kneels to wipe it up. He suddenly puts his hand on her shoulder- she freezes.

KUMAR

Listen to me. Keep your mind clear.
And that's it. You will have peace
of mind. My dear, don't worry.
Learn to adjust yourself.

54 TIME LAPSE MONTAGE

54

DR. RICHARD BERENDZEN (V.O.)

(during montage)

The distance is not inordinately
great. But one of the challenges
you have on interplanetary travel
is prolonged, weightless
conditions. You're in zero G. There
is a possibility of cosmic rays
coming from stars, and that could
be dangerous to them. But once
there, you have no idea what you're
about to encounter. What really are
the beings on this other planet
like?

Rhoda at the school, cleaning.

John sits at his piano, making notes on sheet music.

Rhoda leaving the school, her step is lighter, more upbeat.

Rhoda walks through the grass IN SLOW MOTION, staring up at
the sky in wonderment.

John, in his spotless kitchen, absentmindedly eats an apple
from a bowl of fruit.

55 EXT. JOHN'S HOUSE - DAY (10TH VISIT) 55

John carries a ladder around the side of the house.

John, on the ladder, repairs the side of the house. He has not engaged in intense physical labor in years. He mops the sweat from his brow, relishing it.

56 INT. JOHN'S HOUSE/BEDROOM - DAY 56

Rhoda, washing a window, watches as John hammers.

She gathers dirty clothes from the floor, dirty towels from the bathrooms, strips sheets off the beds. She works quickly, authoritatively, more woman of the house than hired help.

As Rhoda untangles the sheets from John's bed, she finds a RED SWEATER. She throws it into the laundry bin of dirty clothes.

57 INT. JOHN'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - LATER 57

Rhoda prepares lunch. John sits down at the kitchen table, his head in his hands.

RHODA
What happened?

JOHN
I tried to do too much.

Rhoda fills a glass with water and brings it and John's container of medications to him.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Thanks.

RHODA
You know that story of the Russian
cosmonaut?

JOHN
Uh-uh. (sips)

(CONTINUED)

57

CONTINUED:

57

Rhoda sets John's lunch down on the table in front of him, then sits down at the table.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Thanks.

RHODA

So, the cosmonaut. He's the first man ever to go into space. Right? The Russians beat the Americans. So he goes up in this big spaceship, but the only habitable part of it's very small. So the cosmonaut's in there, and he's got this portal window, and he's looking out of it. And he sees the curvature of the Earth for the first time. I mean, the first man to ever look at the planet he's from. And he's lost in that moment. And all of a sudden, this strange...ticking begins coming out of the dashboard.

She picks up a knife and starts tapping on the table, repeatedly. John reacts. The tapping is annoying.

JOHN

Okay, yeah.

Rhoda continues to tap on the table as she tells the story. She is very animated.

RHODA

So he rips out the control panel, right? Takes out his tools, trying to find this sound, trying to stop this sound. But he can't find it, he can't stop it. It keeps going. A few hours into this, it begins to feel like torture. A few days go by with this sound, and he knows that this small sound will break him. He'll lose his mind. (chuckles) Well, what's he gonna do? He's up in space, alone in a space closet.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

57 CONTINUED: (2)

57

RHODA (CONT'D)

He's got twenty-five days left to go with this sound. So the cosmonaut decides the only way to save his sanity is to fall in love with this sound. So he closes his eyes...

Rhoda puts her hand up in front of John's eyes. He closes them. Rhoda continues tapping, but a bit softer, slowing down.

RHODA (CONT'D)

...and he goes into his imagination. And when he opens them...

Rhoda pauses and stops tapping. We hear music....

RHODA (CONT'D)

...he doesn't hear ticking anymore. He hears music. And he spends the remainder of his time sailing through space in...total bliss...and peace.

58 EXT. JOHN'S HOUSE - DUSK

58

In the sky above John's house, Earth 2 hangs in the sky and behind it, a full moon shines.

59 INT. JOHN'S HOUSE/LIVING ROOM - LATER

59

John lies on a couch with a cold rag on his head and his eyes closed, his headache has subsided somewhat. Rhoda carries a basket of LAUNDRY into the room and sets it on a chair. She begins folding the clean clothes.

JOHN

Why are you cleaning houses?

RHODA

I like to clean.

JOHN

Nobody likes to clean.

(CONTINUED)

59

CONTINUED:

59

RHODA

Some people build houses, some
people decorate them, some people
clean them.

JOHN

How old are you? Did you go to
college?

RHODA

No. I read.

JOHN

A wise choice. (sighs) I was a
college professor. You learn more
doing it by yourself.

RHODA

Did you hear about that contest?
The Shuttle to Earth Two?

JOHN

Mm-hm.

RHODA

I submitted an essay.

JOHN

You did?

RHODA

It's silly, but....

JOHN

You'd go?

RHODA

Yes.

JOHN

You don't know what's out there.

RHODA

That's why I would go.

John absorbs this. Rhoda continues folding laundry.

(CONTINUED)

JOHN

It's a bad idea. Like Plato's allegory of the cave, and people living in the cave! All they knew was what was in the cave. And one day, one of them gets out. He goes out and...sees the real world. He comes back and tells the others. You know what happened to him? They beat him up. They didn't believe it. "That can't be," they said. I don't think we're ready to know what's out there. It's a bad idea.

RHODA

So you'd rather stay in the cave? I mean, if Galileo had felt that, we'd still think we're the center of the universe, that the sun is orbiting us. They tried to burn him at the stake for that.

JOHN

Yeah, maybe they should have. We still think we're the center of the universe. We call ourselves Earth 1 and them Earth 2. You think they call themselves Earth 2?

John is getting worked up, he's angry. He pulls the cloth off his forehead and looks up at Rhoda as she is folding the RED SWEATER.

RHODA

Probably not--

JOHN

(cuts her off)

Did you wash that? Did you wash that sweater?

RHODA

(stammers) Yeah. Yes, I, I didn't dry it. I laid it--

John stands up and rips the sweater from Rhoda's hands.

(CONTINUED)

59 CONTINUED: (3)

59

JOHN
Give me that!

John, greatly pained, brings the sweater to his nose, inhaling the scent deeply. Suddenly sharp and angry:

JOHN (CONT'D)
Why did you wash that?! Stop washing things! Just stop washing things! Leave them alone! Please, just go!

He starts to leave the room, the red sweater in his hand. Rhoda runs out the door.

60 INT. METRO NORTH - NIGHT

60

Rhoda sits by the window, factory smoke stacks spew black clouds into a darkening sky. Earth 2 is visible between clouds of pollution.

A young Latino kid has an iPod boom box. The passengers of the train car listen to the broadcast. Men and women in suits commuting home from work. A kid with a fro. A construction worker. Everyone isolated in their own world of thoughts, all silent as they hear:

MALE RADIO GUEST
(over radio)
This isn't a planet with little green men and blue avatars. It's essentially a mirror Earth. If we strike them, they could strike us. If we attempt to insulate them, they could insulate us. It's the perfect scenario for mutually assured destruction.

61 INT. RHODA'S HOUSE/ATTIC - DAYS LATER

61

Rhoda sits on her mattress, watching the light shining in through the window as it seems to move in reverse, speeding up.

62 INT. CUSTODIAL OFFICE, HIGH SCHOOL - MORNING

62

Rhoda arrives. A woman's voice is heard coming from TV monitor.

FEMALE VOICE (
(over television)
Preparations are nearing
completion. Interplanetary travel
to Earth 2. The modified Saturn 5
rocket has undergone rigorous
testing to meet federal aerospace
guidelines. Protestors are calling
it a modern day Tower of Babel.

In Kumar's place, a young Latino guy with a mustache,
FEDERICO.

RHODA
Where's Kumar?

FEDERICO
Checked out.

RHODA
When's he coming back?

FEDERICO
I don't think he is. He poured
bleach in his ears.

RHODA
What? Why'd he do that?

Federico turns back to his desk work.

FEDERICO
Look, I don't know. I mean....why
did he pour bleach in his eyes?

RHODA
He blinded himself?

(CONTINUED)

62 CONTINUED:

62

FEDERICO

Oh, yeah. You didn't know? He said
he was tired of seeing himself
everywhere.

63 EXT. RHODA'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

63

Rhoda walks down the street toward her house. She slows as
she nears the drive- a truck parked across the street at a
safe distance.

John's truck.

Rhoda stops, thinking: *He knows. He knows everything.*

She considers running, either for the house or away in the
other direction. But she approaches John's car on the
driver's side.

John leans toward that window. His hair is combed. He wears a
nice shirt and a jacket. The effect is notable - he is
handsome. Arrestingly so.

JOHN

Hi.

RHODA

Hi.

JOHN

Um, would you mind coming around to
the passenger side? Just 'cause
there's traffic, and....

RHODA

Oh.

Rhoda walks around the truck onto the sidewalk as John rolls
down the passenger window.

JOHN

I tried to reach you at your work,
but they said they'd never heard of
you.

(CONTINUED)

63

CONTINUED:

63

RHODA

Um, management changes there all the time.

JOHN

Is that why none of my checks have been cashed?

RHODA

That's weird, I.... It must have slipped through their books. I mean, I've been getting paid, so....

JOHN

Okay, well, anyway, that's.... (sighs) That's not why I'm here. I wanted to apologize for the other day. You know, I just--

RHODA

(interrupting him)

I'm sorry, I shouldn't have been...touching things that you're....

JOHN

No, it's not-- It's not your fault. I should not have gotten upset. I'm sorry. Can I take you somewhere? And show you something?

RHODA

Right now?

JOHN

Yeah.

RHODA

I have to help my mom out, but--

JOHN

Please? Come with me?

Rhoda gets into the truck.

64 INT. YALE MORSE RECITAL HALL - NIGHT

64

John unlocks the front door. He and Rhoda enter a darkened lobby. John carries a instrument case.

He leads Rhoda down the aisle of the empty auditorium.

John, distracted, nervous, guides Rhoda down the aisle to the seventh row.

JOHN
You know, the best seat in the
house is this row, right here.
It's the one in the--

He gestures for her to sit in the center of the row. Rhoda sits down.

John leaves her. He mounts the stairs to the stage and places a chair there, then takes a SAW and a BOW from the instrument case.

He's nervous to perform for her. He draws the bow across the saw. It's a strange, tremulous sound.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Just a little out of tune.

He draws the bow a couple more times. It sounds the same.

JOHN (CONT'D)
(tongue in cheek)
That's better, huh?

He sits for a long moment. Then finally, he plays-

Bending the saw, curling it as he bows across, drawing a haunting melody from the cold, dead metal.

Rhoda listens, riveted to the music...

INTERCUT MONTAGE:

Fragments of footage of outer space.

Astronauts in spacesuits hover in space.

(CONTINUED)

64

CONTINUED:

64

John playing music live, the music builds and swells.

Smoke building around a shuttle launch.

Rhoda and John, lost in the music, which swells unbearably, breaks-

The weightlessness and impossible silence of the universe.

More footage of the space shuttle taking off.

Rhoda, utterly still, tears falling from her eyes.

65

INT. JOHN'S HOUSE/LIVING ROOM - LATER

65

John and Rhoda lie spooned together. Rhoda has her arms wrapped around John, holding him from behind.

John starts talking, as if something had been holding his tongue and now he is free- words just tumbling out.

JOHN

I'd finally got to a content place
in my life.

Rhoda stiffens, staring at the back of John's head as he continues.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Our son was five and my wife was
pregnant with a girl. And
then...they were killed. Drunk
driver, teenager. I was in a coma.
And I was sleeping all the time.
And I was so...angry. So afraid of
what I might do to that kid. You
know? So I made sure my brother
got all the court documents. The
driver was a minor, so I never
found out the name. You still
there?

Rhoda tightens her arms around John again.

66 INT. METRO - NIGHT 66

Rhoda makes her way through the train to the rest room and locks herself inside. She stares at herself in the mirror, then turns and vomits into the toilet.

Rhoda sits on the floor, tears running down her face.

67 INT. HOSPITAL/HALLWAY - DAY 67

Rhoda follows a nurse down the hallway and enters Kumar's room.

68 INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY 68

WHITE NOISE of an intensive care unit. BEEPING of machines monitoring heartbeats, breath, signs of life.

NURSE

He can't hear or see anything.

RHODA

Thank you.

NURSE

You're welcome.

The nurse leaves. Rhoda stands beside Kumar's bed, putting her hand gently on his shoulder. He smells her scent.

KUMAR

Rhoda....

Rhoda lies beside him on the bed, taking his hand.

KUMAR (CONT'D)

You are wondering why....

Rhoda snuggles closer to Kumar.

KUMAR (CONT'D)

No.... No. No. You know why.

Rhoda traces the word FORGIVE on the palm of Kumar's hand. Kumar begins sobbing, tears rolling down his cheeks.

69

EXT. WILLIAMS HOUSE - AFTERNOON

69

Jeff, Rhoda's brother, shoots hoops in the front drive. Rhoda passes by on the way to the steps leading up to the attic at the back of the house.

JEFF

Oh, Rhoda. Yeah, I got some
information you might wanna hear.
Shoot a three for it?

Jeff throws the basketball to Rhoda. She throws it back to him, unsmiling, and starts up the stairs to the attic.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Okay, okay, okay, okay, okay, okay,
okay, wait. Um, I'll give you a
hint. Do you want to get high?

RHODA

With you?

JEFF

No, no.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Do you...want to get...high?

Jeff turns and looks suggestively up in the direction of Earth 2. Rhoda looks up, confused.

JEFF (CONT'D)

They called. Number's on your door.

RHODA

Seriously?

JEFF

Seriously.

Rhoda, in shock, opens the attic door and starts to go inside.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Oh, wait, hey! You better write
back to me this time, okay?

70

INT. WILLIAMS HOME/ATTIC - AFTERNOON

70

Rhoda sits with a cordless phone in one hand. In the other, a Post-it note with a single phone number written in pencil. She finally dials.

KEITH HARDING'S SECRETARY

(over phone)

United Space Ventures, Keith
Harding's office.

Rhoda's eyes go wide. She forgets to talk. Then-

RHODA

Hello, this is Rhoda Williams. My
brother gave me this number...

KEITH HARDING'S SECRETARY

(over phone)

Rhoda, yes, just a moment.

Long pause.

KEITH HARDING

(over phone)

Rhoda?

RHODA

Yes...

KEITH HARDING

(over phone)

Hi, it's Keith Harding. I read your
letter. I was very moved by it. You
know, when I was fifteen, my
guidance counselor said to me,
"Harding, you'll either go to
prison or be a millionaire." I'm
grateful it was the latter. But
it's a fine line. Finer than you
think. You still want to go to
space?

Rhoda, unsure of what to say.

(CONTINUED)

70 CONTINUED:

70

RHODA

Do I-- Yes!

KEITH HARDING

(over phone)

The seat is yours. Kerry'll be in
touch with the details. I'll see
you soon.

The line disconnects. Rhoda stares up at the poster on the
ceiling, unable to absorb the news.

71 EXT. HAMDEN - DAY

71

Rhoda, looking down at a folding puzzle of the universe and
the planets in her hands, walks deep in thought. Not seeing
anything, lost in herself and struggling with the culmination
of the recent events, she walks into the street without
looking-

BEEEEEEEEEEEEEP

She is nearly hit by a car.

72 EXT. WATERFRONT - DAY

72

DR. RICHARD BERENDZEN (V.O.)

Within our lifetimes, we have
marveled, as biologists have
managed to look at ever smaller and
smaller things. And astronomers
have looked further and further
into the dark night sky, back in
time and now in space. But maybe
the most mysterious of all is
neither the small nor the large:
It's us, up close.

Rhoda walks onto the beach, toward the water, staring up at
Earth 2, hanging low in the sky among the clouds.

(CONTINUED)

72 CONTINUED:

72

DR. RICHARD BERENDZEN
Could we even recognize ourselves?
And if we did, would we know
ourselves?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

72 CONTINUED: (2)

72

DR. RICHARD BERENDZEN (CONT'D)

What would we say to ourselves?
What would we learn from ourselves?
What would we really like to see if
we could stand outside
ourselves...and look at us?

Rhoda paces at the water's edge, then sits on a rock, playing with the puzzle.

Rhoda rises and starts walking away from the beach.

73 EXT. JOHN'S HOUSE - DAY

73

Rhoda walks slowly toward the house. She stands, listening to John playing the piano.

74 INT. JOHN'S HOUSE - DAY

74

Rhoda wanders through John's house, following the sound of his music...

John plays a keyboard, absorbed, fired up, in the throws of composing something new.

He notices Rhoda finally, standing in the doorway, and smiles at her.

JOHN

Hi.

RHODA

Hi.

JOHN

Nice surprise. You're all dressed up.

RHODA

Do you remember that essay contest I told you about, travel to Earth 2?

JOHN

Uh-huh.

(CONTINUED)

RHODA
I won. I'm going to space.

74

CONTINUED: (2)

74

JOHN

You won? That's great! That's fantastic.

John grabs Rhoda's hand and drags her through the house excitedly. Rhoda follows, laughing happily.

JOHN (CONT'D)

We have to celebrate. Come here, come on. We have to. Come here. We have to celebrate.

RHODA

(laughs) Okay!

JOHN

First things first...is to start with a drink! We have to celebrate. I can't believe.... How many people? How many people wrote in? That is.....

John pours drinks for them.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I'm so happy for you.

John raises his glass to Rhoda.

JOHN (CONT'D)

To the coming true of your most improbable dream. Congratulations.

They toast. John downs his drink in one gulp.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Next step is a feast.

John takes Rhoda's face in his hands and kisses her on the mouth.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I'm gonna cook you a celebration feast. Okay?

RHODA

Yeah.

(CONTINUED)

74 CONTINUED: (3)

74

He kisses her again quickly.

JOHN

Food. We need food first.

75 INT. JOHN'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - LATER

75

John stands at the sink, preparing dinner. Rhoda is seated at the table with her drink and some cheese and crackers.

JOHN

And do they know how prepared you are? I mean, with the Joan Tallis costume? For Halloween?

RHODA

I will be fully-trained in the Mojave Desert.

JOHN

Oh, well, that's comforting.

RHODA

They made me sign this waiver, basically every other line of it says, "If you die, it's your fault."

JOHN

And you seem...you seem totally okay with that. You know, you'll need an executor for your will. Do you have one?

RHODA

No, but I don't have anything.

John carries plates to the table and sits down with Rhoda.

JOHN

Okay, so...nothing to no one. Sounds pretty easy. I think I could handle that. Burial or cremation?

(CONTINUED)

75

CONTINUED:

75

RHODA

I think my body would probably burn
up on reentry. Or be lost in space,
so....

John holds up his glass for another toast.

JOHN

Okay. (chuckles) Ashes to ashes,
dust to dust.

They drink.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I'll have to hold a memorial
service. Who would you like to
attend?

RHODA

I don't know. You?

JOHN

Don't go. Please don't go. We're so
close to something here.

RHODA

(whispering) We can't.

Rhoda flashes back to the horrible scenes from the night of
the accident.

JOHN

Why can't we?

RHODA

You know that we can't.

JOHN

I know that we have.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Stay, please?

Rhoda keeps flashing back to various scenes of her years in
prison and the day-to-day nightmare that has been her life
since the accident. As she tells her story, she continues to
flash back to scenes from the accident.

(CONTINUED)

75

CONTINUED: (2)

75

In her mind, she relives her first contact with John and all the scenes that led them up to the moment they are now sharing.

RHODA

Let me tell you a story. And if, after, you still want me to stay...I will stay. It's about a girl. At the start, she's...naïve ...reckless. She does something that is...unforgivable. And one day, she goes to apologize. But she loses her nerve. She's weak. She lies to him. And then...she thinks that she might, in the smallest ways, be able to make his life just a little bit better. And so she wakes up every day just to do that. And some days she thinks it's for him. Other days, she worries that it's for herself...that it was really just a way to survive what I've done. But I think that I do make you happy.

JOHN

(whispering) Oh, my God.

John begins to understand and turns away from her.

RHODA

I know that you make me happy.

John starts flashing back to the night of the accident, the silent, happy scenes in the car with Maya and Amos play out in his mind.

RHODA (CONT'D)

It was my fault.

John stares at Rhoda.

RHODA (CONT'D)

I killed your wife and your son.

JOHN

You better leave. Get out! Get out, now!

(CONTINUED)

75 CONTINUED: (3) 75

Rhoda just stares at John.

JOHN (CONT'D)
NOW!!

Rhoda finally gets up and leaves the room.

John struggles to catch his breath. He begins to sob, his hand grasping at his chest.

76 INT. METRO TRAIN - NIGHT 76

Rhoda rides the Metro back to Hamden. She sits in a fog, unable to move.

77 INT. WILLIAMS HOME/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 77

Kim stands in front of the television, in shock, as Robert watches from the couch.

REPORTER (VOICE OVER)
The mystery flight member is twenty-one-year-old Rhoda Williams, who is rumored to be an ex-convict. Her records are off-limit to the public as the alleged crime occurred when she was underage. There are reports of offers up to three million dollars on the Web for a ticket aboard USV's flight. We're getting word now that she's arriving at her residence in New Haven, where Robert Hughes is standing by.

Kim motions for Robert to go to the front door.

78 EXT. WILLIAMS HOME - AS SEEN THROUGH A CAMERA 78

Rhoda approaches the house. Press mulling in the front lawn now move for their target. Cameramen, lights, anchors with microphones, an onslaught of attention-

FEMALE REPORTER #1 (O.S.)
Rhoda, over here!

(CONTINUED)

78 CONTINUED:

78

MALE REPORTER #1

Rhoda! Are you going to space?

FEMALE REPORTER #2

Just a few photos. Can I get a
photograph?Rhoda pushes through the throng, Robert grabs her, brings her
safely inside.

REPORTER #1

An ex-convict persuades Branson to
send her to space...

79 INT. WILLIAMS HOME/LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

79

Rhoda starts up the stairs as Kim and Robert look at her,
waiting for her to explain.

ROBERT

Rhoda... You couldn't have told
us? We had to find out from the
media?

RHODA

I just-- I just found out. I- I
wasn't sure I wanted to go. I
didn't....

KIM

Are you going?

RHODA

I'm gonna go.

KIM

Well, now - now, wait a minute. I
mean, don't you think we should
have a discussion about this?There is a knocking at the sliding glass door to the
backyard.

(CONTINUED)

79 CONTINUED:

79

KIM (CONT'D)
Oh, they're in the backyard now!

(CONTINUED)

79 CONTINUED: (2)

79

Robert goes toward the back door. Rhoda goes up the stairs,

KIM (CONT'D)
Rhoda? Rhoda!

Rhoda doesn't answer.

80 INT. WILLIAMS HOME/ATTIC - NIGHT

80

Rhoda lies in bed and examines her TICKET and the RELEASE AND WAIVER OF LIABILITY AGREEMENT. She flips through the packet-diet recommendations, diagrams of the ship, diagrams of sleeping quarters, training schedule, medical forms.

81 INT. WILLIAMS HOME/LIVING ROOM - LATER

81

Rhoda slips quietly into the living room. The lights are off. Silence except for the STEADY DRONE of TV news.

Rhoda takes a framed photograph off a table, frees the small family portrait inside.

INTERVIEWER
(over television)
Joining me now from Washington,
D.C., astrophysicist, Dr. Richard
Berendzen, the original proponent
of this extraordinary Broken Mirror
Theory.

She wanders slowly across the room.

INTERVIEWER (CONT'D)
(over television)
Dr. Berendzen, tell me the
significance of this theory, why it
excites you and how this changes
the possibilities of the planet
known as Earth 2.

(CONTINUED)

81 CONTINUED:

81

DR. RICHARD BERENDZEN
(over television)
In the grand history of the cosmos,
more than thirteen thousand million
years old, our earth is replicated
elsewhere. But maybe there's
another way of seeing this world.
If any small variation arises...
...they look this way, you look
that way, suddenly, maybe,
everything changes. And now you
begin to wonder: What else is
different?

Rhoda stops in front of the television.

DR. RICHARD BERENDZEN (CONT'D)
(on television)
Or one might say that you have that
exact mirror image which suddenly
is shattered.

Rhoda absorbs the implications of this as the broadcast
continues in VO.

DR. RICHARD BERENDZEN (CONT'D)
(over television)
And there's a new reality. And
therein lies the opportunity...and
the mystery. What else? What new?
What now?

Rhoda runs from the house.

82 EXT. STREET, NEW HAVEN, CT. - MINUTES LATER

82

Rhoda runs across the street in her nightgown and a sweater
toward the Metro station.

83 INT. METRO NORTH/TUNNEL - NIGHT

83

Rhoda races toward the train platform.

84 INT. METRO NORTH TRAIN PLATFORM - NIGHT 84

Music: Lykke Li's *Tonight*

Rhoda rides the train.

85 EXT. METRO NORTH TRAIN PLATFORM - HAMDEN - NIGHT 85

Rhoda bursts from the train car as the doors open, and runs through the station to the street.

86 EXT. STREETS, HAMDEN - NIGHT 86

Rhoda runs through the desolate suburban streets. Fast. Very fast. Sprinting. Sweating. Finally arrives at

87 EXT. JOHN'S HOUSE - NIGHT 87

Earth 2 hangs in the sky above John's house. Rhoda knocks on the front door. The house is completely dark.

JOHN (O.S.)
Stay away!

Rhoda runs around to the back door tries to and knocks.

RHODA
Please let me in. Please, just--

JOHN (O.S.)
Stay away from me! Stay away!

Rhoda a window - pushes in the screen, crawls into--

88 INT. JOHN'S HOUSE/BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS 88

Dark. Not a sound.

Rhoda cautiously steps into the hall.

RHODA
John?

(CONTINUED)

88

CONTINUED:

88

Feels her way down the dark hall to the study. She tries the door handle, but it's locked. She knocks.

RHODA (CONT'D)

John?

JOHN (O.S.)

Stay away.

RHODA

John, please let me in.

JOHN (O.S.)

Stay away from me.

RHODA

Open the door.

JOHN (O.S.)

I'm warning you, stay away from me.

RHODA

Please, I have something I have to explain. I have to tell you--
Please, please.

Door flies open with a CRACK--

John, wild-eyed, deranged with rage, shoves Rhoda against the wall, gripping her neck with his hands.

He chokes her.

RHODA (CONT'D)

(gasping) Oh, wait...!

She doesn't struggle.

His knuckles go white, hands trembling. Her face reddens.

She sputters. Struggles to get speak--

RHODA (CONT'D)

(raspy) Harder. Do it.

Her eyes close.

(CONTINUED)

John releases her throat.

88 CONTINUED: (3)

88

Rhoda crumbles.

John walks off into the kitchen, his back to her.

Behind him, Rhoda enters the doorway.

RHODA (CONT'D)

I heard on TV about a theory. They think...that the moment we first saw the other Earth was the moment our synchronicity was broken. That was just over four years ago. Maybe they're up there. And maybe not. But...maybe....

John takes this in. Rhoda sets the ticket down and leaves the house. John hears the door close and turns around.

89 INT. RHODA'S ATTIC APARTMENT - WEEKS LATER

89

There is furniture now, a proper bed. Rhoda spreads a cover over her neatly made bed.

Rhoda sits at a desk, cutting flowers and placing them in bud vases.

90 INT. CUSTODIAL OFFICE, HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

90

Rhoda and Federico finish cleaning the floor in the hallway and enter the office. A TV is running- news coverage of the Virgin Galactic's shuttle launch to Earth II.

Rhoda pushes her cart across the office. She steps up close to the TV.

TELEVISION ANCHOR

(over television)

We are just days before the launch of the United Space Ventures' civilian shuttle. Members of the crew of this dangerous voyage have been training intensely here at the Mojave Spaceport.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

90

CONTINUED:

90

TELEVISION ANCHOR (CONT'D)
The media blackout was finally
lifted with a press conference
early this morning.

John, suited up for travel, appear LIVE, his name captioned
on the screen.

JOHN
(on television)
I'm feeling privileged...

Rhoda watches him.

JOHN (CONT'D)
(over television)
...and oddly, I'm proud.

He looks directly into the camera lens and, it feels, for a
moment, at her.

JOHN (CONT'D)
(on television)
And, of course, nervous and
excited.

The corners of Rhoda's mouth move up a bit. The screen
changes and Rhoda turns away.

TELEVISION ANCHOR
(over television)
The modified Saturn-5 rocket is
undergoing rigorous testing--

RHODA
See you, Freddie.

TITLE CARD: FOUR MONTHS LATER

91

EXT. STREET - DAY

91

Rhoda picks a Happy Face sticker off the street and sticks it
to her coat.

Rhoda walks home. She walks and walks.

(CONTINUED)

91 CONTINUED:

91

But this pilgrimage is different from the ones we've seen her make before- her forced marches through sleet and snow. Unforgiving. Unfeeling. She walks now in concert with the things around her- the trees, the people, the traffic. Aware. Connected.

92 EXT. WILLIAMS HOME - NEW HAVEN, CT - EARLY EVENING

92

It is twilight before Rhoda reaches her house. A thick fog has settled in, enveloping everything in blue.

She walks alongside the house, and we see her fingertips trailing across its wooden shingles. She looks up and stops, her hand drifting downward.

Rhoda does an about-face, emotions flickering across her features.

Rhoda turns around again.

A figure stands in the back yard.

It is herself.

Absolutely Rhoda and also not Rhoda.

A version of Rhoda that never caused the accident, never went to jail, never lost everything, never loved and was loved by John.

Rhoda comes face to face with Rhoda.

And in this moment, finally comes home.

THE END.